

The opinion in support of the decision being entered today was *not* written for publication and is *not* binding precedent of the Board.

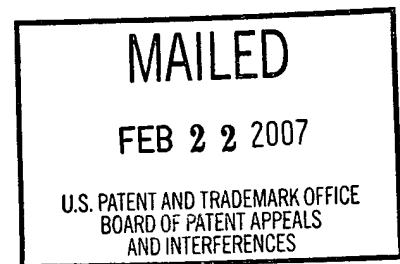
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte JOHN PETER KARIDIS

Appeal 2006-2366
Application 09/756,831
Technology Center 2100

Decided: February 22, 2007



Before JAMES D. THOMAS, MAHSHID D. SAADAT, and
ALLEN R. MACDONALD, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

SAADAT, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION ON APPEAL

This is a decision on appeal under 35 U.S.C. § 134(a) from the Examiner's final rejection of claims 1-14, which are all of the claims pending in this application.

We affirm.

BACKGROUND

Appellant's invention is directed to notebook size computers having widened keyboard base to create a widened I/O area. The display is also widened corresponding to the widened keyboard base.

Representative independent claim 1 is reproduced as follows:

1. A notebook computer with an input/output (I/O) physical user interface comprising:

a base containing a keyboard for said notebook computer, wherein said base has an extended portion beyond said keyboard creating a widened keyboard base;

a widened display, said widened display having a widened I/O display area corresponding to said widened keyboard base, said widened display having a width substantially equal to a width of said widened keyboard base;

an I/O device area disposed within said extended portion of said widened keyboard base; and

an interface signal connection means mounted within said I/O device area, said interface signal connection means operable to couple signals from said notebook computer to an I/O device.

The Examiner relies on the following prior art references:

| | | |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Saegusa | US 5,568,224 | Oct. 22, 1996 |
| Trane | US 6,219,227 | Apr. 17, 2001 (Filed Jul. 27, 1999) |

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Trane alone.

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Trane and Saegusa.

We make reference to the Answer for the Examiner's reasoning and to the Appeal Brief and Reply Brief for Appellant's arguments thereagainst.

OPINION

With respect to the rejection of claims over Trane alone, the main point of contention is whether the widened display of Trane, as a matter of design choice, would have suggested to one of ordinary skill in the art a widened I/O display area corresponding to the widened keyboard base. Appellant argues that Trane does not teach any correspondence between the widened keyboard base and the display device (Br. 5). Appellant further asserts that even if Trane increases the "vertical dimension" of the lid to match the increased vertical dimension of the keyboard, Trane does not use this additional space for increasing the size of the display to create an extended I/O display area (Reply Br. 7).

Trane, in Figures 1 and 2, shows a widened keyboard base to accommodate phone 16 as the I/O device in the area widened beyond the actual keyboard. As conceded by Appellant (Br. 7), the widened keyboard is depicted as increased vertical dimension of keyboard base 12 which matches

an increase in the vertical dimension of closable lid 36 (col. 4, ll. 40-49; col. 7, ll. 21-35). The lid covering the entire widened keyboard base houses display 14 which is shown to cover most of the widened keyboard.

Although speakers 72 are placed in the lid (col. 7, ll. 18-20), they do not cover the entire widened area in the lid that corresponds to the widened keyboard, allowing display 14 to have “a width substantially equal to a width of said widened keyboard base,” as recited in claim 1.

We agree with the Examiner’s rationale (Answer 5) for modifying Trane to the extent that creating an extended I/O display area in the widened display would have been obvious to the ordinary skilled artisan. The widened display area not only accommodates speakers 72, but also allows for additional display such as a widened I/O display area.

With respect to claim 7, Trane does suggest using the appropriate software specific to the I/O device to handle the operation and setting of such device (col. 9, ll. 49-61). Therefore, we also agree with the Examiner (Answer 3¹) that one of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to display the operational data of the I/O device in the keyboard base on any part of the display including the widened display area.

¹ The page number corresponds to those starting in the “Response to Argument” section of the Answer.

Regarding the rejection of claim 4, Appellant argues that Trane does not suggest an interposer to compensate for mechanical and electrical differences related to the I/O device because an opening to match phone 16 would not need any adaptor (Br. 7, Reply Br. 8). We again agree with the Examiner (Answer 5²) that the interface used in Trane for mechanical and electrical connection between the phone and the keyboard base reads on the claimed “interposer” as both receiving opening 46 and electrical connection 54 are clearly described in the reference (col. 5, ll. 44-64). Appellant’s extensive arguments directed to the dictionary meaning of the term “interposer” are not convincing since Appellant’s own Specification describes the interposer as merely having connector features that match both the computer and the I/O device (Specification 6:8-19). Claims will be given their broadest reasonable interpretation consistent with the specification, and limitation appearing in the specification are not to be read into the claims. *In re Etter*, 756 F.2d 852, 858, 225 USPQ 1, 5 (Fed. Cir. 1985). Therefore, considering the broadest claim interpretation, the recited interposer means nothing more than an interface for connecting the phone to the computer. We find that identical functional features are described by Trane as the connection means for the power, data, and antenna as well as

² See footnote 1.

the physical body of the device (col. 6, ll. 2-11). Thus, Trane suggests an “interposer” by providing for the necessary electrical and mechanical interface to connect the I/O device to the computer.

Turning now to the rejection of the remaining claims, we note Appellant’s reliance on similar arguments as presented above with respect to claims 1, 4 and 7 (Br. 14-17). Appellant further argues that Trane does not show any connection between the cellular phone and the hard drive in Figure 6 (Reply Br. 15) and mainly performs a simple switching function (Reply Br. 16). We again agree with the Examiner that the software for handling telephone messaging facsimile, internet connection, etc. in Trane suggests that the computer is operable to execute communication software instructions for controlling communication between the computer and the I/O device. Trane discloses that it is the computer that includes the software to handle telephone functions (col. 9, ll. 56-61) which suggests the presence of communication instructions in the software to control communication between the computer and the cellular phone if the computer is to handle the above mentioned functions. Thus, based on the presented arguments, the weight of evidence in support of each side and our findings above, we find the Examiner’s case of prima facie obviousness to be reasonable and sustain the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of claims 1-14 over Trane alone.

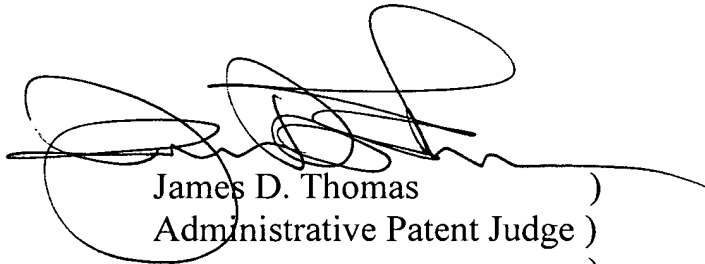
Turning now to the rejection of the remaining claims over the combination of Trane and Saegusa, Appellant argues that combining the references, as proposed by the Examiner, would not have suggested the claimed invention (Reply Br. 20). The Examiner apparently uses Saegusa for suggesting modifications to the size and type of computer displays (Answer 12). Saegusa provides for a display incorporating communication functions of an I/O device (Saegusa, col. 2, ll. 51-53). While combining Saegusa with Trane may be cumulative, we find the Examiner's position to be reasonable to suggest custom designing the display and the keyboard base according to the functions and the positioning of the displayed information. Accordingly, we sustain the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of claims 1-14 over Trane and Saegusa.


CONCLUSION

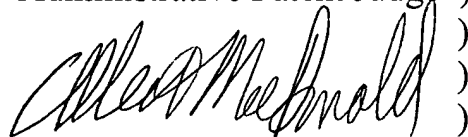
In view of the foregoing, the decision of the Examiner rejecting claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is affirmed.

No time period for taking any subsequent action in connection with this appeal may be extended under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(1)(iv).

AFFIRMED


James D. Thomas)
Administrative Patent Judge)


Mahshid D. Saadat) BOARD OF PATENT
Administrative Patent Judge) APPEALS AND
INTERFERENCES


Allen R. MacDonald)
Administrative Patent Judge)